

Truro School COVID Steering Group Bulletin No.11 (27 Nov 2020)

Truro School has had another strong and purposeful week, another week without notification of any new Covid cases and no recourse to our Track, Trace or isolation procedures. This is good news. Our staff, like many of your children, are tired from the ongoing intensity of the term, but remain committed to the best possible run in to the Christmas break. Positive communication and collaboration between us all remain key to our continued overall success, and not least in supporting those who have found the mental and emotional impact of the pandemic and its ongoing restrictions especially hard, be they pupils, staff, or families.

It is with real relief therefore, that Cornwall has been designated a Tier 1 area of the country. I do very much hope that this further good news allows you, your families, and your businesses, to look ahead to the end of term and the festive period with optimism.

Covid Steering Group Updates from Week 10 (23-27 November):

1. **Hygiene.** Please, as always, keep reinforcing the need for regular and thorough hand washing.
2. **The End of Lockdown.** Our Covid Steering Group has reviewed the measures we have had in place over lockdown in light of its upcoming end, and the designation of Tier 1 status. Below is a summary of our immediate responses:
 - Many co-curricular and Wednesday activities continued during lockdown. Of those that were suspended we will resume all we can in the last ten days of term. This will include Fishing and Ten Tors training. Where any activity is not resumed it will be because a non-school partner organisation is not able to work with us at this short notice again before the end of term, so we will look for January resumption instead. More details of our clubs and activities are included in the main weekly bulletin.
 - Day trips for boarders will resume with immediate effect after lockdown.
 - Provisional planning for trips next term will resume.
 - Facilities that we can re-open for community use will be reopened. This will include the Gym and the Swimming Pool.
3. **Ventilation and Mask wearing.** Whilst we cannot prove any causal link between our lack of transmission at school since half term and our approach to ventilation and widespread mask wearing, the association is clearly of reassurance to many pupils, staff, and families. It is for that reason, and our wish to maximise the chances of you having all the freedom you can after term ends for the festive period, that we will not change these two areas of Covid-safe practice before the end of this term. Regarding ventilation this means pupils should continue to dress warmly. Regarding face coverings this means pupils should continue as now, including making requests to tutors where there are individual circumstances that mean long-term mask wearing is proving a challenge. We will support individuals in that position. Our approach here will be reviewed again ahead of the start of the new term in January, however.

- 4. Covid feedback.** In order to support our review and reflection of Covid-safe measures ahead of January, Prep and Senior School parents will soon be sent a link to a brief survey that focuses on your and your children's experiences of the school's responses to Covid this term. The more replies we receive, the more helpful this survey will be. My and Miss Patterson's thanks in advance for your engagement with it.
- 5. Entry/Exit routes.** Last week I suggested on the Senior site that 1st and 2nd Years consider exiting down the snake path, that 3rd and 4th Years consider leaving via the Poltisco path, and that the 5th and Sixth Forms try to split their exit routes across all available when they can. This is to reduce congestion. Thank you to pupils who have adopted this routine. May I remind them to keep their face coverings on as they move up and down the snake pathway as in all areas on site, until the end of term.
- 6. After School assistance.** If your child needs assistance on site after the school office has shut, and they are unsure where to seek it, please remind them to look at information posted outside the reception door. This will include the phone number of a duty caretaker, and the room where a duty member of SLT is likely to be.
- 7. PE and Games clothing.** Please may I remind parents to ensure that children only attend school in PE/Games kit on days when they do actually have PE/Games. In addition, we are not expecting pupils to replace Truro Games/PE kit with their own equivalent garments, although they may wear warm *undergarments*, along with a coat, hat and gloves. Hoodies, for example, are not permitted, and neither is the hiding of non-uniform clothing under coats please!
- 8. Public Examinations.** As yet, schools in England have not been provided with final clarifications regarding this summer's GCSE and A Level examinations, and contingency plans, by Ofqual. We await this update keenly. In the meantime, we are acutely aware of the anxiety that uncertainty is causing for some pupils, and especially the pressure they may consequently feel about mocks and internal assessments. Our staff are doing all we can to reassure pupils that whilst internal assessments are clearly important (as they always have been), no single result or data set will be the sole basis for any future predictions or judgements. It remains the case that pupils should be supported and encouraged to balance study with wellbeing, and fun – and especially over the Christmas period.

Looking ahead:

As our resilience in the pandemic climate and the winter is tested, the school community has turned its creativity towards Christmas. There will be a Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols (pre-recorded) and an Advent service (remote). Today was a charity day for two important local charities that support some of those in need in our region – the Wave Project, and St Petrocs. Christmas trees are appearing, including the addition of one in our quad for the first time next week. Pupils have begun to decorate their form rooms (quite competitively it seems!) We will run Covid-safe Secret Santas for those keen to take part, and the last week of term will see Christmas lunches for all, a Christmas Jumper day, and some additional sounds and entertainment. I look forward to our community enjoying the coming weeks as we also navigate our way carefully and productively towards the end of a long and successful term.

Mr A Johnson